



# Weekly Bulletin

## St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for over 44 Years

*Father Andrew Clements*, Pastor

Volume 32

2018

Number 27

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Jul 8</b>	<i>6th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 5 / Great Martyr Procopius</i>
		9:30 am      Divine Liturgy      Coffee Hour
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Jul 14</b>	<i>Venerable Eudoxia</i>
		5:30 pm      Great Vespers
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Jul 15</b>	<i>7th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 6 / Frs of the 1st Six Ecumenical Councils</i>
		Readings:    Rom 15:1-7      Matt 9:27-35
		9:30 am      Divine Liturgy      Coffee Hour

### ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / June 24

Attendance: (Adults 107, Children 18)	125
Operating	\$3,709.00
OCA Assessments	210.00
Uganda Children	90.00
Charities	115.00
Icons	98.00

### GRADUATION OPEN HOUSE

In honor of Timofey Kozikov. Sunday, July 22 from 3:00 - 10:00 pm. 7092 Berkshire Hills Dr • Kirtland 44094. Regrets only to Anna (440-463-8282).

### CONFESSION NOTE

Please be planning to approach for your Summer Confession through August. Special times have been added on some Wednesdays, before some Vespers on Saturday and the usual time afterward.

### PRAYER LIST UPDATE

Please be attending to your loved ones on the Prayer Lists. The list seems to only grow with very few names ever changing status or being removed. We should certainly pray for those in need but timely management of the names by those who requested the prayers would be greatly appreciated.

### PRAYER CORNER + + + + +

Eleanor Alexander (Tom's mom), Perry (Capitan), Sbdcn Leonard, Kathy (Denise F's sis), Jim (Ruth's dad), John (Adam's nephew), Ted Geletka, (Fr's frnd), infant Julian, John Clements, Willie (Elena G's son),

Sarah Crivella, Darlene (Mary V's csn), Mary Georges (Peter's mom), Nancy, (Ruth B's frnd), Andy Dzura, suffering Christians in Ukraine and the Middle East.

**Anniversaries:** George & Paula Tintor (7/14x).

**Birthdays:** Elias Kucmanic (7/4), Nick Covelli, Elizabeth Rausch (7/11), Julia Butterfield (7/13), Emma Moore (7/14).

**Newborns:** Nicholas (Jonathan & Larissa).

**Expecting:** Colin & Tamuna, Tom & Laura, Deanna & Patrick, Alexandr & Olga, Chad & Meredith, Matt & Michelle, Tom & Miranda, Mitch & Winnie.

**Memory Eternal:** Donald Starr (6/25, Scott C's fr-in-law).

**Our Seminarian:** Brian Crivella & Family.

*"Virtues are formed by prayer. Prayer preserves temperance. Prayer suppresses anger. Prayer prevents emotions of pride and envy. Prayer draws into the soul the Holy Spirit, and raises man to Heaven."*

— St Ephrem the Syrian —

**Ladies Night Out for Uganda Children, Thursday, July 19, 6:30-8:30 pm**

# Truth, Happiness and Joy

by Dcn George Shumaik

This month we commemorate the birth of the United States of America. In drafting the Declaration of Independence Thomas Jefferson wrote, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”. It is anachronistic that Jefferson along with many other apparently God-fearing men signed this national creedal statement while holding others in bondage. It took almost another century and a bloody Civil War to abolish slavery in the United States. While racial tension and inequality sadly persist, it would be difficult to find anyone who would espouse a return to that abhorrent institution.

Does contemporary American culture continue to embrace the other enumerated truths? Are “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” God-given rights that cannot be taken away? Today it is “self-evident” that human rights are determined by government (hopefully with the consent of the governed). They are not endowed by God and certainly not unalienable. The question of whether there are any absolute truths is contentious with a wide diversity of opinion in our post-modern world.

For many, truth is to be found only in the irrefutable facts of scientific discovery. Personal opinions, preferences and beliefs are allowed as the property of individuals but as such are only relative. What is true for you may not be true for me. For simple propositions this causes little conflict. It may be true that I like broccoli and you don't. When the topic increases in complexity whether philosophical, religious or cosmologic it is fair to say that our society operates under the belief that ‘capital T’ Truth does not exist, should not be sought after because it cannot be found.

For Orthodox Christians, absolute Truth is at the cornerstone of the Faith. Truth is not merely an idea, a philosophy or point of view but a person! “Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’”. (John 14: 5-7) Pilate inquires of Christ at His interrogation - “What is truth?” Jesus either does not answer

or Pilate retreats before a reply is given. In either case, the Church teaches that the answer is self-evident as it is Christ Himself who is the ultimate and final Truth.

The word happy is etymologically a late arrival from 14th century Europe meaning ‘lucky, favored by fortune or prosperous’. It makes sense that our country being founded on a prominent Puritan ethos where prosperity is a direct sign of being among the elect of God, that the founders would enumerate the pursuit of happiness among the list of God-given rights. Happiness, just as truth, has become detached from any sense of the divine and is driven heavily by individual wants and desires for “success” whatever that may be. Allowing for the nuance of translation, the words ‘happy’ and ‘happiness’ are rarely found in the Bible. They never occur in the Gospels and are never spoken by Jesus. There is a word, however, that is found more than two hundred times in the scriptures, the small but poignant – Joy!

The Greek word for joy is ‘chara’, derived from ‘charis’, which means grace. Joy therefore becomes a product of the Grace of God, a gift. Joy suggests a state of being more than a transient emotion. Joy has the feature of being radiated to others. The beloved St. Seraphim of Sarov greeted all with the words “My joy! Christ is risen!”. He taught, “Cheerfulness is not a sin. It drives away weariness, for from weariness there is sometime dejection, and there is nothing worse than that.”

Therefore, the joy of the resurrected Christ should abide within us and radiate from us cheerfully through good times and bad. In regard to happiness, Thoreau's classic insight speaks poignantly with his observation. “Happiness is like a butterfly: the more you chase it, the more it will elude you, but if you turn your attention to other things, it will come and sit softly on your shoulder.” For Orthodox Christians, the ‘other things’ to be attended to are summed within the great commandments Jesus Christ, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:37-39) Amen.